

Inspection of a good school: Brampton Cortonwood Infant School

Chapel Avenue, Brampton Bierlow, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S73 0XH

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 November 2021

Outcome

Brampton Cortonwood Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils work hard and concentrate on their activities. This is because teachers explain things clearly and check that pupils know what to do. Most pupils quickly learn to read with confidence. They enjoy weekly visits to the school library to choose books to take home. Pupils remember important facts. They learn to add and subtract efficiently on paper and in their heads.

Teachers notice quickly when pupils fall behind in their learning. Teachers give these pupils extra help to catch up.

All pupils enjoy their weekly outdoor activities come rain or shine. They solve problems together and learn to be resilient. Pupils explore the natural world and learn how to care for nature. They enjoy looking after the many school pets.

Pupils behave well. They follow the school's rules and routines. They enjoy the regular rewards and praise they receive. Pupils like that their parents get to know how they are doing in school through the communication app. Pupils have confidence in staff to help them sort things out if they fall out with their friends. Staff are vigilant and caring, so pupils feel safe.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Expert teachers and teaching assistants help pupils make quick progress in their reading. Teachers make sure pupils practise reading books that are well matched to their stage of development. This helps pupils to develop reading fluency. There are not yet enough of these well-matched books in school for all pupils to be able to take them home.

Nevertheless, most pupils learn to read well by the time they leave the school. Leaders and teachers notice early those pupils who fall behind. These pupils get extra help each day to catch up. However, leaders do not check this is working as well as it should.

Furthermore, though the weakest readers get to read aloud the right books to an adult in school, this does not take place often enough. As a result, these pupils are not catching

up as rapidly as they might. Pupils love listening to their teachers read stories to them every day. They like choosing books from the library to take home, as well as their phonics reading books. They develop positive attitudes to reading.

Leaders have identified the learning steps pupils need to take in mathematics. This assists skilled teachers in planning the perfectly matched activities to help pupils make quick progress. Children as young as two are helped to explore and learn about numbers and counting. Teachers make sure pupils understand concepts fully before moving them on to the next step. The daily use of physical mathematics resources helps pupils to understand concepts more fully. Teachers notice quickly if a pupil is struggling. These pupils get timely extra help. The high-quality teaching is especially helpful to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

In history, geography and science, pupils in key stage 1 learn and remember lots of useful information. Teachers are ambitious in what they plan for pupils to learn. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about the Houses of Parliament and about King James I in their topic linked to the gunpowder plot. Pupils remember important vocabulary. Leaders have thought about the sequence in which information and ideas are best learned. However, leaders have not planned far enough in advance much of the detailed knowledge pupils should learn. As a result, pupils sometimes have not stored in their memory the knowledge that would help them understand new ideas better. Also, leaders have not finished identifying the knowledge about the world that children in the foundation stage will learn in preparation for doing history, geography and science in key stage 1.

Leaders have planned a curriculum that introduces pupils to ideas and activities that some disadvantaged pupils may not get to experience outside school. The forest school is a particularly strong feature. Pupils undertake outdoor learning activities, on site, every week throughout the year. Pupils learn how to handle and care for plants, trees and animals, including Luna the dog and the many other pets in school. The programme makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal and social development. All pupils, including the disadvantaged and those with SEND, are encouraged to take part in after-school clubs.

The newly appointed head of school and deputy headteacher have not wasted time in making improvements. Teachers value the training and guidance from leaders to help them do their job well. Leaders take steps to help staff manage a healthy work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Well-trained, caring adults understand the many risks to pupils. The staff are vigilant. They report and record everything that may indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. The record of checks to make sure adults are safe to work with children is well organised and complete.

Leaders make and carry out plans to ensure pupils are safe when undertaking potentially risky activities, for example cleaning out the chicken coup or building a den.

Staff teach children how to stay safe in a range of situations, such as crossing the road or using the internet. They ensure pupils know the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children's underwear rules.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The books accompanying the reading scheme are perfectly matched to it. However, there is an insufficient number of these books to allow all pupils to take them home to practise. Leaders should ensure that pupils regularly take home a book that perfectly matches the phonics knowledge they have learned.
- Pupils who have fallen behind in phonics receive extra help to catch up. Leaders do not keep a close eye on the catch-up work to make sure it is of the highest quality. Furthermore, those pupils who do not get enough practice reading aloud at home are not given enough practice in school to compensate. Leaders should urgently purchase enough matched reading books so all pupils are able to take them home. Leaders should ensure the weakest readers get to read aloud most days to an adult and that this is maintained consistently.
- Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum. The reading and mathematics curriculums are especially well designed. However, the curriculum plans in many subjects do not contain enough detail. This means pupils sometimes do not have the prerequisite knowledge that would help them better understand new ideas to which they are later introduced. Furthermore, leaders have not considered, in enough detail, what children in the early years should learn in some areas. Leaders should define the more detailed knowledge in science and all non-core subjects at key stage 1 that will help pupils to build knowledge cumulatively over time. Leaders should consider the detailed knowledge children in the early years should acquire in understanding the world and expressive arts and design.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour, or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Brampton Cortonwood Infant School, to be good in June 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	144324
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10200624
Type of school	Nursery and Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martin Harrison
Headteacher	Vanessa Finley
Website	www.bramptoncortonwoodinfants.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Since the school was last inspected, it has joined the James Montgomery Academy Trust (JMAT). From September 2021, the school was federated with Brampton Ellis Primary School (another JMAT academy), overseen by a shared local governing board. Almost all pupils, when they leave Brampton Cortonwood Infant School, are enrolled at Brampton Ellis Primary School.
- Since the previous inspection, provision for two-year-olds has been established.
- There have been several changes in leadership since the previous inspection. The current head of school and deputy headteacher commenced their appointments in September 2021. A new early years leader has been appointed to take up post in January 2022.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation

- The inspector met with the head of school, deputy headteacher and leaders from JMAT, including the chief executive officer. The inspector also met with one of the trustees and the vice-chair of the local governing board.
- The special educational needs coordinator was not available to meet. The inspector discussed this aspect of the school's work with the head of school. The inspector was unable to meet with the early years foundation stage leader who has recently left the school. This aspect was discussed with the head of school and the deputy headteacher.
- The inspector undertook deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with the subject leader, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The subjects were considered in both the early years foundation stage and in key stage 1.
- The inspector also discussed with leaders curriculum plans in science and geography.
- The inspector examined the single central record and several policies relating to safeguarding and child protection. The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and looked at safeguarding and child protection records. Several staff members were questioned about their safeguarding responsibilities. The inspector checked that staff are regularly trained. Pupils were asked about how they are made to feel safe in school and what they have been taught about how to stay safe. The security of the building and site was checked. A few written risk assessments were examined.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan and the school's written self-evaluation.

Inspection team

Phil Riozzi, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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